

March 13 a full-fledged revolution broke out in Vienna.

On March 15, while Kossuth was in Vienna presenting his 12 points to the Habsburg monarchy, students in Budapest armed only with Kossuth's reforms seized control in what has come to be known as the bloodless revolution. The following day the Hungarian delegation, led by Kossuth, submitted Hungary's demands before Emperor-King Ferdinand. The Austrian monarch quickly agreed to the points, prompting the Hungarian Diet to put the revolutionary reforms into effect. Thus, Hungary's future was forever influenced as the result of a peaceful, lawful revolution.

The Hungarian Diet immediately began to work nonstop to pass new laws. By April the Diet had passed 31 progressive measures, which essentially amounted to a new constitution. These "April laws" attempted to provide for the needs of a nation moving towards modernization.

Unfortunately, Hungarians did not have long to experience * * * government were intent on squashing any semblance of Hungarian independence. On September 10, Baron Jelacic, with encouragement from the Habsburgs, led 40,000 Croatian troops across the Hungarian frontier. Hungary, led by Kossuth, was in the process of building up its army, and initially lost several battles to the invaders. Finally, General Arthur-Gorgey, who was to become one of Hungary's greatest generals, was given control of the Hungarian army. By April 1849 Gorgey's military brilliance and the tremendous bravery of the elite Hungarian Honved troops had driven all of the invaders out of Hungary, and Hungary had officially declared its independence from Austria.

The Habsburg's were humiliated and forced to call on Russian Czar Nicholas I for assistance in bringing the now independent Hungary back under Austrian control. As a result, Hungary's independence was short-lived because in June, 1849, a joint Austrian-Russian offensive overwhelmed the valiant Hungarian defenders. On August 13, Gorgey's forces laid down their arms before the Russians at Vilagos. Kossuth was forced to flee his beloved homeland and would live the rest of his life travelling the world to gain support for Hungary's cause. In a speech made prior to his departure, Kossuth said, "My principles were those of George Washington. I love you, Europe's most loyal nation."

Although, the Hungarian revolution of 1848 did not end in prolonged independence for Hungary, it did result in at least one very noble achievement. The revolution prevented the Austrian government from revoking the emancipation of the peasants and all other unfree persons in the Habsburg's empire. For this historic accomplishment and for striving towards the ideal of the American Revolution, Hungarians and Americans of Hungarian descent should always be proud. I join with the strong Hungarian-American population in the downriver communities to celebrate the Hungarian revolution of 1848, truly an important turning point in the history of the Hungarian nation.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 1998

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, The headline of an article in today's *The Hill* says it all: "Soft Money Soars as Campaign Reform Falters."

As an unyielding supporter of campaign finance reform, I am sickened by what the article goes on to discuss, "The soft money explosion is a result of campaign officials finding innovative ways to channel the supposedly non-federal money into congressional campaigns. Campaign officials are boasting of their fundraising prowess: But this has reformers fearing that the growing stream of soft money into Democratic and Republican congressional committees has turned into a mighty river that threatens to flood the political system's banks."

Soft money contributions are unlimited and the congressional campaign committees in 1997 set a soft money raising record of more than \$30 million. As campaign finance reform has once again died in the Senate, and gasps for life in the House of Representatives, the fundraising machine gets more and more out of control.

Mr. Speaker, the problem is clear, there is too much money involved in the campaigns. The influence of money has created the appearance that special interests rule the democratic process. People no longer believe they have a voice in their government. I urge you to schedule a vote on campaign finance reform on the floor of the House of Representatives. We must act soon. The people of western Wisconsin have told me to continue the fight until you agree to allow a vote. The people refuse to take "no" for an answer.

MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT CONGRESS

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 1998

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, March 4, 1998 into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT CONGRESS

One thing I have found over the years is that people aren't hesitant to tell me what they think about Congress. Many of the public's comments and complaints are very perceptive and right on the mark. People are quite right, for example, that Congress has difficulty thinking long-term and that our campaign financing system is a mess. But often what I hear shows an inadequate grasp of what Congress does and how it works. Misconceptions about Congress can erode confidence in government and weaken civic involvement.

Some Examples: The criticisms of Congress are numerous.

Ethics standards: People will often say that Congress' ethics standards have declined and that large numbers of Members are dishonest and corrupt. Certainly some Members engage in improper conduct, yet most experts on congress would say that congressional ethics has improved consider-

ably over the years. When I came to Congress, there was no House ethics committee, no written code of conduct, and no financial disclosure requirements. Members could accept lavish gifts form special interests and convert campaign contributions to personal use, and were rarely punished for personal corruption. None of that would be tolerated today.

Special interest money. Americans hear all the stories about the enormous amount of fundraising Members must do today and believe that Congress is a "bought" institution. It is clear that the "money chase" has gotten out of hand, and that we ignore this problem at our own peril. I would be the last to say that contributions have no impact on a Member's voting record. But there are many influences that shape Members' voting decisions—including their assessment of the arguments, the opinions of experts, their party's position, and, most importantly, what their constituents want. Members know that if they don't vote the way their constituents want, they simply won't be re-elected.

Impact of Congress: People will often say that Congress' actions have little or no impact on their daily lives, even as they receive their Social Security checks, drink safe water, drive on the interstates, attend college through student loans, or use the Internet. Many aren't aware of the overall spending priorities of Congress, thinking that most federal spending goes to welfare, foreign aid, or defense, when in fact the biggest chunk, by far, goes to programs for older Americans like Social Security and Medicare. Such misconceptions can make national policy debates all the more difficult.

Members out of touch: Most Americans feel that Members don't pay much attention to what their constituents want. My experience is that most Members are acutely aware of their constituents' views. They are in constant contact with constituents and go to great lengths to solicit their views. They return home most weekends, and closely follow local opinion through staff reports, polling results, and local news reporting. Indeed, the reverse contention may be closer to the mark, that Members today pay almost *too much* time noticing every "blip" in the public opinion polls and thinking about what will play well in the next election rather than what would be good for the country.

Perks and pay: Many people complain about Members always looking out for their own perks and pay, enriching themselves at the taxpayer's expense. Almost daily someone will contact my office upset that Members receive free medical care or don't pay income taxes or contribute to Social Security—none of which is true. Suffice it to say that Members are acutely aware that their pay and benefits are highly sensitive politically. Over the years Congress has eliminated many special benefits, and it should continue to do so. People are surprised to hear that since I've been in Congress, Member pay has not even kept up with inflation. My current pay is \$20,000 less than if my 1965 pay had been adjusted to inflation.

Slow, messy processes: People don't like Congress' slow, messy, ponderous processes, which allow bills to be buried in committee or stalled through lengthy floor debates. We certainly need to streamline the operations of Congress, but we misunderstand the role of Congress if we think it should be a model of efficiency and quick action. The founding fathers never intended it to be. They clearly understood that one of the key roles of Congress is to slow down the process—to allow tempers to cool and to encourage deliberation, so that unwise or damaging laws are not enacted in the heat of the moment.

Constant bickering: One of the most frequent complaints I hear about Congress is